

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING THE MINORITY BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AGEN- CY ON ITS 45TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. CEDRIC L. RICHMOND

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. RICHMOND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to applaud the Minority Business Development Agency on this its 45th Anniversary. Established in 1969, the MBDA has worked tirelessly and diligently to promote the growth and global competitiveness of a critical segment of the U.S. Economy, the minority business community.

Why is this important? Well Mr. Speaker it is important because investing in contracts, capital and counseling for our minority owned businesses will yield significant results for minority communities. If we help our minority businesses help themselves, their success will bring sustainable economic growth and trans-generational wealth creation that will transform many of our hardest hit areas.

At the time of the Agency's creation there were only 322,000 minority-owned firms in the nation. Today, that number stands at 5.8 million firms contributing \$1 trillion towards our nation's economy. MBDA has been a significant part of this impressive growth story. Over the last five years in particular, MBDA has helped firms gain access to over \$19 billion in contracts and capital resulting in the creation and retention of nearly 60,000 jobs. These are great numbers, Mr. Speaker and we have to thank the MBDA and its team for their efforts. But we have more work to do.

I thank MBDA for all it has accomplished over the last 45 years. In the coming years, the growth of America's workforce will come from partnerships between the public and private sector. MBDA serves as a bridge connecting government and private resources to leverage existing competencies in service to the growth of the minority business sector. I applaud MBDA's mission and will continue to support it in the decades ahead.

RECOGNIZING THE ORLANDO MUSEUM OF ART

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 90th anniversary of the Orlando Museum of Art. Since its founding, the Museum has remained committed to enriching the cultural life of Florida and developing inclusive programs that serve every segment of a diverse community.

In 1924, the Orlando Museum of Art began as a small group of artists who met informally to display and discuss their work. They formed the Orlando Art Association, teaching art

classes and arranging exhibits. In 1987, the name was officially changed to the Orlando Museum of Art, and within two years, it was acclaimed as one of the best in the region. The Museum features a dynamic set of collections ranging from contemporary art to Golden Age masterpieces and has hosted various high-profile exhibits.

The Museum has maintained its national accredited status by the American Association of Museums without interruption for over 40 years and continues to provide excellence in the visual arts. I thank the Orlando Museum of Art for its ongoing dedication to advancing the arts in our community.

H. STEVEN SMEDLEY, WEST HAN- OVER TOWNSHIP FIRE COMPANY NO. 1

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor H. Steven Smedley, a member of West Hanover Township Fire Company No. 1 and the recipient of the organization's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Mr. Smedley joined the West Hanover Twp. Fire Co. No. 1 on November 4, 1980 and quickly developed a passion for the fire service. In the 33 years he has been with the Fire Company, he has taken on many important leadership roles including 1st and 2nd Lieutenant; 1st and 2nd Captain; 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Assistant Chief; and Deputy Chief. Additionally, he has served as Recording Secretary, Vice President, President and Trustee and fulfilled the duties of an Apparatus Truck Foreman and Chief Engineer for the organization. Outside the fire company, Mr. Smedley has been active in the Dauphin County Fireman's Association, Dauphin County Fire Chief's Association, and the Dauphin County Hazardous Materials Response Team.

Mr. Speaker, for 33 years H. Steven Smedley has devoted his life to West Hanover Township Fire Company No. 1. Therefore, I commend him for his hard work and dedication and wish him the best in his future endeavors.

HOMEOWNER FLOOD INSURANCE AFFORDABILITY ACT OF 2014

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, as the ranking member of the House Budget Committee and someone who supported the original Biggert-Waters flood insurance reauthorization, I am keenly aware of the need for re-

form in this area. The federal flood insurance program is \$24 billion in debt, and its below-market rates encourage development in environmentally sensitive and flood prone areas.

Having said that, it has also become abundantly clear that the transition to market-based rates under the original Biggert-Waters bill has been unduly onerous for many homeowners, and the pace of that transition is in need of adjustment.

Today's bipartisan compromise attempts to provide that adjustment in the form of greater predictability around rate increases for covered properties, paid for with a surcharge on all policyholders. While there were certainly other ways to address this issue, and I could have supported more reform than appears in this particular bill, I will vote for tonight's compromise in order to move this program forward.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, on March 4, 2014, I was unavoidably detained attending to representational activities in my congressional district and thus unable to return in time for rollcall votes No. 91 and 92.

Had I been present I would have voted as follows: On rollcall No. 91, I would have voted "aye" (March 4) (H.R. 3370, Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014 (Rep. GRIMM—Financial Services)); On rollcall No. 92, I would have voted "aye" (March 4) (H. Res. 488, Supporting the people of Venezuela as they protest peacefully for democratic change and calling to end the violence (Rep. ROS-LEHTINEN—Foreign Affairs)).

JAYSON TERDIMAN, 2014 U.S. OLYMPIC LUGE TEAM

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Jayson Terdiman of Berwick, Pennsylvania who represented the United States in the men's doubles and team relay luge competitions in the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia.

Since the age of five, Jayson has been an active member of Berwick's athletic community, playing basketball, hockey, and baseball and running cross-country. He continued to pursue many of these activities during his time at Berwick High School, eventually graduating in 2007 with distinguished honors.

Despite his other athletic commitments, Jayson got his start in luge early, becoming a member of the USA Luge Development Team

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

at age 12. His devotion to the sport helped him make the USA Luge Candidate Team and the USA Luge Junior National Team, before earning a spot on the 2014 U.S. Olympic Team.

Jayson has received numerous accolades for his achievements in luge. From 2007 to 2008, he won three Junior World Cup Bronze Medals and the Junior World Luge Championship Bronze Medal. He is also a two-time U.S. Junior National Doubles Champion. In 2008, he was the Norton U.S. Nationals Doubles champion, and he and his doubles partner, Chris Mazdzer, were named the 2008 Luge Team of the Year. In 2010, he won the World Cup Bronze Medal, and he won silver medals in the World Cup Team Relay competition in 2011 and 2013. During the 2014 Olympic Winter games, he placed eleventh in the men's doubles competition with his partner Christian Niccum, and he helped the U.S. place sixth in the team relay.

Mr. Speaker, every four years, our nation sends our very best athletes to represent us in the Winter Olympics. Therefore, I commend Jayson Terdiman for his hard work and achievements as part of the United States luge team, and I wish him the best in his future endeavors.

CELEBRATING THE BICENTENNIAL OF THE CITY OF GREENVILLE, ILLINOIS

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the City of Greenville, Illinois, on its Bicentennial Celebration. The city will celebrate throughout the year with a variety of community events, including a Labor Day gala featuring a parade, historic re-enactments and musical performances, a July 4th opening of a time capsule buried in 1990, and the burial of a new time capsule on New Year's Eve with mementos from the year's festivities. The city will also erect a permanent monument within city limits to commemorate this historic occasion.

The City of Greenville was founded in 1815 by pioneer George Davidson and is one of the oldest communities in the state. Throughout its history, Greenville has played host to many important events. Notably, the city served as a key stop on the Underground Railroad, shepherding slaves to freedom from the slaveholding southern states. The city also hosted speeches by Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas during their 1858 campaign for the United States Senate.

Since its founding, the city has grown and now is the home to more than 7,000 residents. Over the past 200 years, Greenville has produced numerous noteworthy individuals. It was once the home of Colorado Governor Job Adams Cooper, Emmy-Winning television producer Robert Brinner and Nobel Prize Laureate Edwin G. Krebs, among others.

I extend my congratulations to the City of Greenville upon this special occasion. It is my prayer that the Lord blesses its residents with another 200 years of health and prosperity.

RECOGNIZING MERNI FITZGERALD ON THE OCCASION OF HER RE- TIREMENT FROM FAIRFAX COUNTY

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and commend Merni Fitzgerald on the occasion of her retirement after a long and distinguished career in public service for the residents of Fairfax County, Virginia. For the past 13 years, Merni has been the director of the Office of Public Affairs, serving as the "voice of Fairfax County." Prior to that, she spent 15 years as the public information officer for the Fairfax County Park Authority.

Throughout her career, Merni dedicated herself to keeping Fairfax citizens well informed about the great work of their local government, while promoting engagement in our community. In her role as Director of Public Affairs, she managed external and internal communications for the largest county government in the Commonwealth of Virginia and the National Capital Region. She and her staff provided communications strategy and services for more than 40 county agencies and customer service to residents and visitors.

From routine communications about Board of Supervisors meetings to emergency alerts, Merni ensured Fairfax remained in constant contact with its constituents, and she was instrumental in pushing the County onto social media to foster more opportunities for two-way communications. Whether she was sharing news and information about a notable accomplishment or a natural disaster, Merni was a calm, soothing, and informative voice for the County.

Well-respected by her peers, Merni chaired the Northern Virginia communicators group and a similar committee at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, which encompasses 21 jurisdictions in Virginia, Maryland and the District of Columbia. In that role, she coordinated communications for the regional Emergency Preparedness Council, where we worked together for a number of years.

Prior to her current position, Merni served two terms on the Falls Church City Council. She also served as Chairman of the Northern Virginia Regional Commission. Her keen political sense, expert communications skills, and firm grasp of the news business has earned her the trust of the elected leadership throughout the region. She was recognized as the Virginia Communicator of the Year in 2000, and in 2007 she was recognized as one of PR News magazine's PR Professionals of the Year for her "untiring service to the community and the media."

I can certainly attest to that. I had the distinct pleasure of working with Merni during my 14 years of service on the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. She was a trusted member of our leadership team and helped the county manage numerous crises including: the tragic events of 9/11, which occurred shortly after her appointment as director of public affairs; local anthrax attacks, during which the government center became a screening facility and medical distribution center; the 2002 Washington sniper shootings;

Hurricane Isabel in 2003, which damaged multiple roads and properties across the county and resulted in the loss of drinking water for most residents for several days; the shooting of two police officers outside the Sully District Station in 2006; a dustup over local soup kitchens caused by an over-zealous bureaucracy; the recent record snow storms, which literally shutdown the region for days; and an earthquake in 2011. Interspersed through those events, she coordinated public information about annual multi-million dollar bond referendums and countless Board "presentations."

Most people probably don't know Merni is a published author. Earlier in her career, Merni was an assistant to the Press Officer at the Peace Corps, an agency close to my heart given my international relations background and seat on the House Foreign Affairs Committee. During her time with the Corps, Merni authored two books for school-age children: one commemorating the Peace Corps' 25th Anniversary and another on the role of Voice of America radio programming in U.S. efforts overseas.

As Merni begins this new chapter in her life, I want to extend my warmest regards to her and her family. I hope she is able to find a suitable new home for the growing collection of nutcrackers that adorn her office at the Government Center, and I have no doubt she will find a way to continue making contributions to our community even in retirement.

Mr. Speaker, Merni Fitzgerald's commitment to public service has set an example that will benefit our community for generations to come. Her accomplishments are truly outstanding and deserving of our sincere appreciation. When I was Chairman of the County Board, we often joked when retirement announcements like this came before the Board that we should not allow such talented and dedicated staff to leave public service, and I certainly wish that was the case here.

I wish Merni the best of luck in her retirement, and I ask my colleagues in the House to join me in expressing our appreciation for her long and fruitful service to the residents of Fairfax County and the National Capital Region.

RECOGNIZING NACDS RxIMPACT DAY

HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the Sixth Annual NACDS RxIMPACT Day on Capitol Hill. This is a special day where we recognize pharmacy's contribution to the American healthcare system. This year's event, organized by the National Association of Chain Drug Stores, takes place on March 12–13. Nearly 400 individuals from the pharmacy community—including practicing pharmacists, pharmacy school faculty and students, state pharmacy leaders and pharmacy company executives—will visit Capitol Hill. They will share their views with Congress about the importance of supporting legislation that protects access to community and neighborhood pharmacies and that utilizes pharmacists to improve the quality and reduce the costs of providing healthcare.

Advocates from 40 states have travelled to Washington to talk about the pharmacy community's contributions in over 40,000 community pharmacies nationwide. These important healthcare providers are here to educate Congress about the value of pharmacists and protect access to the essential services they provide as part of our healthcare delivery system. And just as these providers travelled to meet with us, Members of Congress have toured retail chain pharmacies in our own communities more than 250 times since 2009. There are 106 chain pharmacies in my own Congressional District, and those stores employ nearly 10,000 Washingtonians.

Patients have always relied on their local pharmacist to meet their healthcare needs. The local pharmacist is a trusted, highly accessible healthcare provider deeply committed to providing the highest quality care in the most efficient manner possible.

As demand for healthcare services continues to grow, pharmacists have expanded their role in healthcare delivery, partnering with physicians, nurses and other healthcare providers to meet their patients' needs. Innovative services provided by pharmacists do even more to improve patient healthcare. Pharmacists are highly valued by those that rely on them most—those in rural and underserved areas, as well as older Americans, and those struggling to manage chronic diseases. Pharmacy services improve patients' quality of life as well as healthcare affordability. By helping patients take their medications effectively and providing preventive services, pharmacists help avoid more costly forms of care. Pharmacists also help patients identify strategies to save money, such as through better understanding of their pharmacy benefits, using generic medications, and obtaining 90-day supplies of prescription drugs from local pharmacies.

Pharmacists are the nation's most accessible healthcare providers. In many communities, especially in rural areas, the local pharmacist is a patient's most direct link to healthcare. Eighty-nine percent of Americans reside within a five-mile radius of a community pharmacy. Pharmacists are one of our nation's most trusted healthcare professionals. Utilizing their specialized education, pharmacists play a major role in medication therapy management, disease-state management, immunizations, healthcare screenings, and other healthcare services designed to improve patient health and reduce overall healthcare costs. Pharmacists are also expanding their role into new models of care based on quality of services and outcomes, such as accountable care organizations (ACOs) and medical homes.

As we refine healthcare reform and seek new strategies to improve patient care, pharmacists will play a critical role. I believe Congress should look at every opportunity to make sure that pharmacists are allowed to utilize their training to the fullest to provide the services that can improve care and lower costs. In recognition of the Sixth Annual NACDS RxIMPACT Day on Capitol Hill, I would like to congratulate pharmacy leaders, pharmacists, students, executives, and the entire pharmacy community represented by the National Association of Chain Drug Stores, for their contributions to the good health of the American people.

TRIBUTE TO LIEUTENANT COLONEL JOHN RAFFERTY

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Lieutenant Colonel John Rafferty of the United States Army for his extraordinary dedication to duty and service to our nation at the Deputy of the Army House Liaison Division on Capitol Hill. Lieutenant Colonel Rafferty will soon transition to the Legislative Director for the Commander of the International Security Assistance Force in Kabul, Afghanistan.

Army Congressional Liaison officers provide an invaluable service to both the military and Congress. They assist Members and staff in understanding the Army's policies, actions, operations, and requirements. Their firsthand knowledge of military needs, culture, and tradition is a tremendous benefit to Congressional offices.

A native of Great Falls, Virginia, Lieutenant Colonel Rafferty enlisted in the Army in 1987 and served in Germany with the 8th Infantry Division. Two years later, he left the active Army to return to college and pursue a commission as an Army Officer. He received his commission as Second Lieutenant in the Regular Army as a Field Artillery officer. During the next twenty years, LTC Rafferty served in a variety of tactical assignments, including service in 1st and 3rd Battalions of the 75th Ranger Regiment, staff officer in the 25th Infantry Division, command of two artillery batteries in the 1st Armored Division, and command of 1st Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment of the 82nd Airborne Division. Along with becoming an Army Ranger and Master Parachutist, he served multiple combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan. Additionally, he was selected as an exchange officer for the U.S. Marine Corps Amphibious Warfare School and for the United Kingdom Joint Services Command and Staff College with the British Military.

Lieutenant Colonel Rafferty is both warrior and scholar. He holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in History from Longwood College, a Master of Arts in Defense Policy from King's College-London, and a Master of Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College.

His devotion to his country is matched only by his commitment to family. Lieutenant Colonel Rafferty is married to the lovely Tracey Lowery Rafferty. They're proud parents of a thirteen-year-old daughter, Erin, and a twelve-year-old son, Evan.

Lieutenant Colonel Rafferty's great work has not gone unnoticed. His military awards include the Combat Action Badge, Expert Infantry Badge, three Bronze Star Medals, and the Iraq and Afghanistan Campaign Medals. He was inducted into the Honorable Order of Saint Barbara and is a Distinguished Member of both the 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment and 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to recognize the selfless service of Lieutenant Colonel John Rafferty as he proceeds into the next chapter of his remarkable career and continues to serve the United States of America. I wish him the best as he continues to serve our great Nation and proceeds to the next chapter in his remarkable career.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ALLYSON Y. SCHWARTZ

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 90, I was unable to attend the vote.

Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

RECOGNIZING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF JAXSON'S ICE CREAM PARLOUR

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Monroe Udell and Ms. Linda Zakeheim, the owners of Jaxson's Ice Cream Parlour located in Dania Beach, Florida.

Jaxson's has long been a staple in Dania Beach and this cultural landmark currently employs more than 70 people. Now, Monroe and Linda have taken it upon themselves to improve the standard of living for their employees. On February 24, 2014—the day of Monroe's 86th birthday—Jaxson's raised their minimum wage from \$7.93 to \$10.10 an hour.

Monroe and Linda have always appreciated the work their employees do to create a top rated restaurant. This higher minimum wage will allow their employees to enjoy a better standard of living and improved economic security. It will allow them to contribute more to the South Florida economy. And, it will show other businesses in the region that paying a higher wage is possible, profitable, and the right thing to do.

In 1965, Boisey Waiters, Dania's first African American City Commissioner, told me about Jaxson's, and I instantly became a fan. Monroe first opened the restaurant in 1953, and even then, it was a beacon. At that time, most establishments in Broward County did not serve colored people. Yet, from the very beginning Monroe took a stand against segregation by hiring and serving all restaurant patrons, regardless of race. That is why I was not surprised to hear that Monroe and Linda acted on their own conscience to help their employees afford a better lifestyle. Sixty-one years later, Jaxson's is still showing the way with their actions to better support their employees.

The employees of Jaxson's have worked tirelessly to develop the reputation of a restaurant that provides excellent food, great ice cream, and a family friendly atmosphere.

Mr. Speaker, I am so pleased to acknowledge and thank Monroe Udell, Linda Zakeheim, General Manager Jerry Smith, as well as all the employees working at Jaxson's. I wish them many more years of success.

RECOGNIZING DAN "OX" OCHSNER

HON. MICHELE BACHMANN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mrs. BACHMANN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dan "Ox" Ochsner for more than a

decade of work as a radio host in St. Cloud, MN.

Originally from Fargo, ND, Ox began his radio career in 1991 as a rock DJ out of Fergus Falls. He's come a long way since then, now hosting an afternoon show on weekdays in St. Cloud with popularity in the Twin Cities and here in D.C.

He's not only an on-air personality and radio entrepreneur. Ox and his wife, Jan, have made an effort to stay involved and connected in the community. His involvement with Jaycees, Sertoma, Chamber of Commerce and the Boy Scouts haven't gone unnoticed. The St. Cloud Times named him one of the top 40 most influential people of the decade (2000–2010).

As I continue on in my final year in the House of Representatives, I look back with appreciation and respect for the people of the 6th District. One of those special people is Dan Ochsner. With a personality as fiery as his hair, he can always be counted on to provide a humorous take on current events to the people of central Minnesota.

There are few people kinder, funnier, and more genuine than Ox. It's an honor to represent a district in the halls of Congress with talented individuals like Dan. The 6th District of Minnesota is lucky to call Dan Ochsner one of their own.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ERIC A. "RICK" CRAWFORD

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, March 4th, 2014 I was inadvertently detained on rollcall Votes 91 and 92. Had I been present to vote I would have voted "yes" on both.

MARIA PEDRIANI, HAZLETON LODGE #200 "2013–2014 ELK OF THE YEAR"

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Maria Pedriani, the Hazleton Lodge #200 "2013–2014 Elk of the Year," for her loyal service to the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks.

Mrs. Pedriani has been a resident of Hazleton, Pennsylvania for 36 years. After graduating from Mahanoy Area High School, she took post graduate courses at Luzerne County Community College and owned her own cosmetology business in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. Since joining the Elks two years ago, Mrs. Pedriani has been an outstanding asset in accomplishing lodge goals and is well known for her superb cooking abilities.

Beyond her involvement with the Hazleton Elks, Mrs. Pedriani has been an active member of the local community. She served on the board of "Helping Hands" and is a member of the Holy Rosary Church. In 2011, she was the keynote speaker at the American Cancer Society—Relay for Life where she spoke about her

successful battle with Hodgkin lymphoma. She is also a proud wife, mother, and grandmother.

Mr. Speaker, for her committed service to the Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks, I commend Maria Pedriani and congratulate her for being named the Hazleton Lodge #200 "2013–2014 Elk of the Year."

RECOGNIZING THE NORTHERN VIRGINIA CONSERVATION TRUST

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust for receiving accreditation by the National Land Trust Accreditation Commission. The accreditation process is very rigorous and signifies the highest standards of excellence in land conservation.

When Congress first passed the tax incentives for land conservation, it placed a high degree of trust in non-profit land trusts to manage these transactions properly. Over the years, land conservation has become increasingly complex and requires careful adherence to the national Land Trust Standards and Practices. This accreditation process helps give taxpayers confidence that land trusts are a worthy public investment.

I want to thank the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust for its dedication and effectiveness in educating the public about the importance of conservation and preserving local natural areas, trails, streams, and parks. Its work helps to protect wildlife habitat, water quality and healthy communities. Since its founding 20 years ago, the Trust has protected 5,370 acres across Northern Virginia. And, by achieving national accreditation, the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust has expanded its capacity to accomplish this mission far into the future.

Mr. Speaker, I invite my colleagues to join me in commending the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust for its hard work and commitment to our community. I wish the Trust and its supporters continued success in their conservation efforts.

IN HONOR OF CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 2 EDWARD "EDDIE" BALLI

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Chief Warrant Officer 2 Edward "Eddie" Balli, an American hero who gave his life in service to his country. Eddie loved his job as an Unmanned Aerial System Operations Officer Platoon Leader for the 2nd Calvary Regiment. He provided the eyes in the sky for the soldiers on the ground.

On January 20, Eddie's unit was attacked by insurgents in the Kandahar province of southern Afghanistan. Believing it was his duty to place the safety of his fellow troops before his own, Eddie was killed while providing cover to protect the rest of his unit. His sac-

rifice ultimately saved the lives of several civilians and his fellow soldiers.

Eddie was a native of Salinas, California, graduating from North High School. Soon after graduation, he felt the call to serve his country. Following in the footsteps of others in his family, he joined the Army in 1991. During his distinguished career, Eddie received many accolades including the Bronze Star Medal and the Purple Heart during his many deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan. He was an inspiration to all who served with him. Eddie made himself available to talk with younger soldiers, mentoring them and offering both professional and personal advice.

Eddie was also a devout family man. He often spoke fondly of his wife, Kristy Balli, and his three children, Michael, Momilani, and Desirae. To his family he was more than just a soldier. He was a kind and loving husband, father, brother and son who had an infectious humor and quirky personality. His family was proud of his patriotic service to his country and the care he demonstrated for his fellow soldiers.

That caring personality, as both a soldier and a family man, is what made Eddie an extraordinary person. He was an exemplary soldier, family man, and friend who put the needs of others before his own.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of a true patriot and hero, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Edward Balli. Our nation is grateful for his service and we promise that his life, legacy, and his sacrifice for our country will not be forgotten.

HOMEOWNER FLOOD INSURANCE AFFORDABILITY ACT OF 2014

SPEECH OF

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address some of the many lingering issues surrounding the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

The bill passed by the House yesterday will help a significant number of Missourians who have been saddled with inconceivable rate increases, who cannot sell their property, and who run the risk of losing their homes. I have heard from one constituent in particular who told of an unexpected premium increase that jumped from under \$1,800 to more than \$11,000, a cost difference that she and her husband will have difficulty meeting. It is my sincere hope that this legislation helps to address these issues.

While I supported H.R. 3370, I regret that the bill presented no opportunities for an increased presence for the private insurance market. One of the primary public policy goals associated with NFIP has been to spur private insurers to enter the flood insurance space. As long as NFIP generously subsidizes risk, however, the private market will remain a secondary player in the program. We must create a program that becomes, over time, actuarially-sound and creates a greater role for the private sector while reducing the government's role.

Yesterday the House took a step towards ensuring that our constituents are not saddled

with impossible premium increases, but our work on this issue is far from done. More must be done to reign in FEMA, create more accountability in NFIP, and ensure the program is on sound footing. We must also demand more accountability from FEMA and NFIP and work to ensure that flood maps are accurate and not overly encompassing.

If NFIP has taught us anything, it is that Federal government should not be involved in the insurance industry. Many living in Missouri's Third Congressional District are in desperate need of relief, and NFIP is in desperate need of reform. Private insurance companies have a role to play, and the program should be changed to allow the private market to participate. I will continue to work to make the program sustainable, reliable and more functional than it is today, and hope that my colleagues will join me in the effort to increase the private sector role in flood insurance.

COMMEMORATING THE ANNIVERSARY OF POGROM AT SUMGAIT

HON. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the anniversary of the pogrom that took place in Sumgait, Azerbaijan against people of Armenian descent. A pogrom is a violent riot aimed at massacre or persecution of an ethnic or religious group. On the evening of February 27, 1988 hundreds of Armenians were massacred in the seaside town of Sumgait in Soviet Azerbaijan. This violence against Armenians continued for three days and resulted in the reported killing of 32 people, with countless others that remain unaccounted for.

It is my hope that by speaking out publicly against atrocities suffered by our brethren around the world, we will help reaffirm America's commitment to an enduring, peaceful and democratic resolution.

I ask that my colleagues join me in solemnly commemorating the death of these innocent lives. My thoughts are with the Armenian community, especially those that lost loved ones during the pogrom at Sumgait 26 years ago.

TRIBUTE TO MAYOR CHOKWE LUMUMBA

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life and legacy of Mayor Chokwe Lumumba of Jackson, Mississippi.

Mayor Chokwe Lumumba was born August 2, 1947, in Detroit, Michigan. He was the second of eight children born to Lucien and Priscilla Francis Taliaferro. Mayor Lumumba earned his Bachelor's degree in Political Science from Kalamazoo College in Kalamazoo, Michigan. He later finished first in his law school freshman class before graduating cum laude from Wayne State University Law School.

Mayor Lumumba was a nationally renowned attorney who was licensed in Mississippi, Michigan and U.S. Federal Courts. He has represented clients in over 16 jurisdictions, including Canada and the Choctaw Court. Mayor Lumumba has won settlements and/or judgments for victims of medical malpractice, employment discrimination, sexual harassment and police misconduct. He has worked in high profile cases such as the representation of the late Tupac Shakur. In 2011, he helped win the release of the Scott Sisters who had served 16 years of double life prison sentences for an \$11.00 (eleven-dollar) robbery. He successfully represented Lance Parker who was falsely accused of assault during the 1992 Los Angeles uprising which followed the brutal beating of Rodney King.

Since 1968, Mayor Lumumba has crisscrossed the globe to fight for "Human Rights for Human Beings." He supported the survivors of Katrina by serving on the Board of the People's Hurricane Relief Fund and organizing other activists to form the Mississippi Disaster Relief Coalition and co-organizing the Gulf Coast Survivors Assembly. Mayor Lumumba's work as a community activist has spanned over four decades. He has worked with organizations such as the Jackson Human Rights Coalition, which pressured the State to retry the person who murdered Medgar Evers. He has worked for over twenty years organizing, directing, coaching, and mentoring youth through programs such as the Jackson Panthers Basketball Organization. He was also a devout member of Word and Worship Christian Church.

Prior to his election as Mayor, Mr. Lumumba served as Jackson City Councilman for Ward 2. Widowed by his late wife Nubia Alake, Mayor Lumumba was a loving and devoted father to his three children, Kambon Mutope, Rukia Kai and Chokwe Antar Lumumba. He was also the proud grandfather of Qadir Lumumba-Benjamin.

Mr. Speaker, I take great pride in recognizing Mayor Chokwe Lumumba as a bright, caring, and humble individual. I commend his outstanding and historical contributions to the City of Jackson, the State of Mississippi, the Civil Rights Movement, and national politics.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CHARLES W. BOUSTANY, JR.

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, due to inclement weather on the morning of Tuesday, March 4, my flight was unable to leave for Washington, DC, from Lafayette, Louisiana. Therefore, I was unable to return in time for votes. Had I been present to vote, my voting record would reflect the following: H.R. 3370—"yea"; H. Res. 488—"yea."

I also offer the following statement in favor of the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act:

I support H.R. 3370, responsible legislation keeping thousands of Louisiana homeowners from facing dramatic increases in their flood insurance premiums.

The National Flood Insurance Program must be financially sustainable and it is irresponsible for it to carry a debt of \$24 billion.

However, we must find a balance between fiscal stability and punishing homeowners who followed the rules. This legislation brings fairness to homeowners and much-needed stability to the NFIP.

I am pleased this bill restores the grandfathering provision, the home improvement provision clause, and provides meaningful protection to Pre-Firm properties. I look forward to FEMA improving the flood mapping process to help inform the decision-makers in communities across America.

Local leaders must be vigilant in managing the growth of our neighborhoods in South Louisiana to ensure they are using the best available data to drive our zoning requirements, our building codes, and our insurance ratings.

Congress must remain engaged in its oversight of this program and its implementation in the years ahead. It must be committed to finding creative ways to further strengthen the NFIP without harming policy holders or the general public.

HONORING TORIN KOOS

HON. DAVID G. REICHERT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor an Olympic athlete from Washington State's 8th District, Mr. Torin Koos. Mr. Koos just returned from representing our nation in the XXII Olympic Winter Games in Sochi, Russia. Mr. Koos is an incredible athlete who has reached the pinnacle of his sport and competed in the Men's Sprint Free Qualification.

I applaud both his achievement and the hard-work and perseverance that paid off during these games. Simply to attend the Olympics is to be among an elite group of people. I thank Mr. Koos for representing America so well, and I am proud to call him a constituent and a Washingtonian.

RECOGNIZING THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE KHOJALY TRAGEDY

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, Azerbaijan is a key strategic partner of the United States, and I am honored to be Co-Chairman of the House Azerbaijan Caucus. Azerbaijan has been a key ally in a post 9/11 era, emerging as one of the first countries to offer strong support and assistance to the United States.

I would like to take a moment to recognize the anniversary of the tragedy that took place in Khojaly, Azerbaijan, a town and townspeople that were destroyed on February 26, 1992.

We just marked the 22nd anniversary of that devastating and heartbreaking day. Sadly, today there is little attention or interest paid to the plight of Khojaly outside of Azerbaijan. However, one of our greatest strengths as elected officials is the opportunity to bring to light truths that are little known and command recognition. As a friend of Azerbaijan, I am proud to remind my colleagues that we must

never forget the tragedy that took place at Khojaly.

At the time, the Khojaly tragedy was widely documented by the international media, including the Boston Globe, Washington Post, New York Times, Financial Times, and many other European and Russian news agencies.

Khojaly, a town in the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, now under the control of Armenian forces, was the site of the largest killing of ethnic Azerbaijani civilians. With a population of approximately 7,000, Khojaly was one of the largest urban settlements of the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan.

According to Human Rights Watch and other international observers the massacre was committed by the ethnic Armenian armed forces, reportedly with the help of the Russian 366th Motor Rifle Regiment. Human Rights Watch described the Khojaly Massacre as "the largest massacre to date in the conflict" over Nagorno-Karabakh. In a 1993 report, the watchdog group stated "there are no exact figures for the number of Azeri civilians killed because Karabakh Armenian forces gained control of the area after the massacre" and "while it is widely accepted that 200 Azeris were murdered, as many as 500–1,000 may have died."

Azerbaijan has been a strong strategic partner and friend of the United States. The tragedy of Khojaly was a crime against humanity and I urge my colleagues to join me in standing with Azerbaijanis as they commemorate this tragedy.

RECOGNIZING PAUL TAIT

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Paul Tait on the occasion of his retirement from the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) after 42 years of dedicated service.

Paul attained his undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of Michigan. He came to SEMCOG in 1972, and was named Executive Director of that organization in 1998. Under Paul's leadership, SEMCOG has used data and information to help make decisions resulting in literally billions of dollars in road, transit, and water infrastructure investment.

As important as data and information are to regional planning, local government actions are also critical. Paul recognized this and worked to give all communities—large and small—a voice in the process.

In a speech at the National Defense Executive Reserve Conference in 1957, President Eisenhower, who of course had served as Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces in Europe during World War II, made this remarkable assertion: "Plans are worthless, but planning is everything." He went on to say that while there are indeed some immutable truths, most of what we confront in our daily lives changes over time. President Eisenhower's basic point was that we shouldn't put too much faith in static plans, but rather invest in planning that assumes that conditions will change.

Eisenhower's admonition is relevant because, for more than four decades, SEMCOG

has been the regional planning partnership in Southeast Michigan. Over that time, our area has seen an astonishing amount of change. SEMCOG's task has been to recognize the changing circumstances and needs in our area—whether it's land use, transportation, air quality, water infrastructure, or economic development—and help our communities shape a regional public policy that is responsive and dynamic. Paul has played a key role in SEMCOG's work and effectiveness.

Among his many other accomplishments, Paul is the devoted husband of Chris. They have four children and six grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Paul Tait for his leadership at SEMCOG and his commitment to the citizens of Southeast Michigan.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$17,444,385,246,890.50. We've added \$6,817,508,197,977.42 to our debt in 5 years. This is over \$6.8 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

U.S. POLICY TOWARD SUDAN AND SOUTH SUDAN

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, last week, I chaired a subcommittee hearing on U.S. policy toward Sudan and South Sudan. The hearing was very important, and not only because the United States Government has been involved in Sudan and its various crises for the past three decades. Many of us first became interested in Sudan in the 1980s because of the persistent reports of modern-day slavery, in which northern Arabs enslaved African southerners. My office helped to bring one of these unfortunate people to America for medical treatment after he was freed, and his story affected me deeply.

Ker Deng had been kidnapped into slavery while still a child, and while he was an adolescent, the man who held him in bondage rubbed peppers in his eyes, blinded him and later abandoned him. Ker is studying here in the United States thanks to his benefactor, Ellen Ratner, and is awaiting a second operation to help him recover at least some of his eyesight. How many other Sudanese will never have that opportunity or even achieve their freedom? For example, Ker's mother has never been freed from bondage.

We began supporting southern Sudanese efforts to end the oppression from the North in the mid-1990s. In 2005, we helped both North and South achieve the Comprehensive Peace

Agreement, CPA, to end the long civil war and provide the steps for a mutually beneficial peace and productive coexistence. Unfortunately, the rebellion in the Darfur region distracted from efforts to fulfill that agreement.

Khartoum's alliance with the Janjaweed Arabs resulted in mass killings and displacement in Darfur. An estimated 1.9 million people were displaced, more than 240,000 people were forced into neighboring Chad, and an estimated 450,000 people were killed. At the time, Congress insisted that this was genocide. Eventually, the Bush administration concurred, but the United Nations declined to go so far in their terminology, calling what happened in Darfur "crimes against humanity."

A peace agreement between the main rebel force in Darfur and the Government of Sudan was signed in May 2006, but it did not last. In fact, no sustained agreement has been reached between the government and Darfur rebel groups—partly because these groups have continued to split and form offshoots, but also because the Khartoum government has not appeared willing to resolve the Darfur situation constructively. In June 2005, the International Criminal Court initiated an investigation that resulted in arrest warrants for Sudan President Omar al-Bashir and three other government officials and militia leaders. None of these warrants has been served, none of the four have been taken into custody and the Government of Sudan has refused to cooperate with the ICC.

Meanwhile, the CPA remained unimplemented. In January 2011, South Sudan, which had been a semiautonomous region of the country since the signing of the CPA, voted in a referendum on whether to remain part of Sudan or become independent. Having been marginalized and mistreated for decades, it was not surprising that southern Sudanese voted overwhelmingly—at the level of 98.8 percent—to become an independent nation. On July 9, 2011, South Sudan became the world's newest nation. However, these unimplemented elements of the CPA would bedevil the new country from its birth.

A referendum in the disputed Abyei region and consultations on the status of Sudan's Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile states were never completed. In May 2011, Sudanese armed forces assumed control of towns in Abyei, quickly forcing at least 40,000 residents to flee. Within weeks, fighting spread to Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile states, as Khartoum sought to crush the Sudan People's Liberation Army—North, which had fought with southerners in the North-South civil war. Northern attacks on residents in those three areas continue unabated.

Last year, Sudan and South Sudan engaged in a conflict over oil supplies from the South, involving allegations that Khartoum was undercounting the level of oil flow to cheat South Sudan, as well as the southern seizure of the oil town of Heglig. Again, this dispute was largely the result of unresolved issues from the CPA.

South Sudan continues to be engaged in a conflict that began last December, despite a cessation of hostilities agreement. Thousands have been killed and tens of thousands have been displaced. Exact figures are constantly shifting because this conflict continues. I will soon introduce a resolution offering a sequenced approach to reaching a lasting resolution to this newest crisis. This conflict also

is the result of too little attention paid to the warning signs because of preoccupation with one of the many crises in the two Sudans.

Over the last three decades, I and other committee and subcommittee chairs have held numerous hearings on Sudan—from the North-South civil war to the Darfur conflict to the fighting in Abyei, Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile to the current conflict in South Sudan. All this attention is more than justified, but our approach to addressing them has been intermittent. Too often, each crisis is seen as a problem unto itself, unrelated to other issues in these two countries.

In fact, successive administrations and Congresses, advocacy groups and humanitarian organizations have focused so much on individual crises and issues that no one has created a panoramic view which shows how all these individual crises interrelate with each other. This “stovepiping” of government policy and public attention has meant that long-term solutions have been neglected while short-term eruptions have had to be dealt with. In reality, the two Sudans are inexorably linked and no crisis in either can be resolved successfully without taking into account the entire Sudan-South Sudan panorama.

We must end this cycle of myopic policy formulation based on the crisis of the moment and adopt a long-term, holistic vision of what the best interest of the people of Sudan and South Sudan demands—indeed, what would be in the best interest of the entire region.

As we learned in our subcommittee hearing on the Sahel crisis last May, Islamic extremists have their sights set on making inroads wherever there is conflict, across the belt of Central Africa stretching from Senegal to Sudan and beyond. Continuing unrest in the two Sudans only serves to provide training grounds or bases of operation for terrorists. Hardened ethnic conflict can spread to long-term enmity that no peace agreement alone can resolve. Hopefully, this will not be the case in South Sudan, but that conflict is headed in that ominous direction.

Two years ago, I held a meeting in my office with representatives from Sudan’s Nubian, Darfuri, Beja and Nuba communities, who all believe that Khartoum is engaged in a long-term effort to exterminate non-Arab Sudanese. Have we missed such a pernicious campaign while hopping from one crisis to another as each appeared?

The purpose of last week’s hearing was to examine current U.S. policy toward Sudan and South Sudan to see how we can unify our policy in order to more effectively end long-running tragedies that appear get worse despite all the busy attention to which we pay them. This involves more than what the Department of State and other executive agencies do, or even what support Congress can provide. Advocacy and humanitarian organizations also must join government in seeing the forest and not just the trees, so to speak.

We must develop, support and implement policies toward Sudan and South Sudan that make sense in the long term and not just produce temporarily satisfying peace accords that have no sustainability. Peace and prosperity for both countries are linked, and we must act accordingly. The hearing, we hope, will serve to highlight what must be done.

HOMEOWNER FLOOD INSURANCE AFFORDABILITY ACT OF 2014

SPEECH OF

HON. KATHY CASTOR

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to urge all of my colleagues to pass H.R. 3370, the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act.

If this bill passes we will keep middle class families in their homes, bring relief to our local economy and provide needed reliability to middle class friends and neighbors.

Since November 2013, I have urged action on flood insurance on every bill that moved through the Rules Committee to the floor of the U.S. House.

Families who were facing massive flood insurance premium increases will now be able to breathe easier. The reforms will help ensure that flood insurance will be there in times of disaster.

This legislation allows individuals purchasing covered homes to also assume the predetermined rates and restores grandfathered properties under prior law so that owners would pay rates applicable to the original flood risk.

We have learned that we must keep a close eye on FEMA and flood maps and this legislation gives us more tools to do so. I credit the outcry many of our neighbors, realtors, chambers of commerce and others who helped focus the pressure on the Republican leaders in Congress to act.

This has been an anxious time for homeowners, but the immense pressure by families and the business community on the House GOP was an effort that paid off. This Congress has an unfortunate reputation for not addressing the challenges that middle class families face. Today, we can come together to do just that.

I thank my Florida colleagues who worked in a bipartisan manner to bring relief to more than two million National Flood Insurance Program policyholders in our state and I urge a “yes” vote on the bill.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

HON. JASON T. SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 100th Anniversary of the National Cooperative Extension Service. The Smith-Lever Act of 1914 created this educational partnership which began between the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the nation’s land-grant universities. The Cooperative Extension Service grants state universities funds to produce significant research which is available for the use of the public across the nation. In addition, research based education programs have improved the lives of many through the advancements made in farming, business, health services, and emergency management.

In the Show-Me State, the Missouri Extension Services have been fundamental to com-

munity development. Nearly seventy percent of Missouri’s taxpayer funded research is produced by the land grant universities. This information is used to enhance vital industries like agriculture, business, and healthcare. The state of Missouri has benefitted immensely through the active role of the Extension programs which equip our communities with vital information and educational programs.

For the advances made possible in Missouri and across the nation by the Cooperative Extension Service, it is my pleasure to recognize the 100th Anniversary of the National Cooperative Extensions in the House of Representatives.

UNITED STATES-ISRAEL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP ACT OF 2014

SPEECH OF

HON. LOIS FRANKEL

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, anyone who turns on the news for even a few minutes will see our good friend Israel in a region of chaos and unrest.

War in Syria—with refugees pouring into Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon. Violence in Iraq. Upheaval in Egypt. And of course, the threat of nuclear advancement in Iran.

And yet, Israel remains a strong, stable, and reliable ally.

More than ever, we must do all we can to strengthen our critical relationship.

H.R. 938, the United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2013, will do just that.

It designates Israel as a “major strategic partner” and increases our mutually beneficial cooperation in the areas of energy, science, water, agriculture, alternative fuel technologies, and homeland security.

At a time of deep political division in Congress, this bill has across the board support, with 351 cosponsors, a reflection that our alliance with Israel is rooted in shared national interests, common values of democracy and freedom, and a recognition that the same forces threatening Israel also threaten the United States.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 938.

NAGORNO KARABAKH ANTONOMOUS REGION OF AZERBAIJAN

HON. JUDY CHU

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Ms. CHU. Mr. Speaker, twenty-six years ago, the Nagorno Karabakh Autonomous Region of Azerbaijan petitioned to become part of Armenia. Their desire to determine their own future was met with brutal force and violence that was tragically reminiscent to events preceding the Armenian Genocide.

For the next two years, the Armenian population was the target of racially motivated pogroms. Hundreds were murdered, many more were wounded, and the Armenian community still grapples with the scars from the horrific attacks in Sumgait, Kirovabad, and Baku.

On February 20, 1988, Nagorno Karabakh began its national liberation movement with a resolution to secede from Azerbaijan, and on December 10, 1991, Nagorno Karabakh officially declared independence, becoming a democratic state committed to freedom and respect for human rights. But today, the people of Nagorno Karabakh are still forced to live under the constant threat of violence from Azerbaijan.

As we commemorate the somber anniversary of the beginnings of their struggle, we wish for the peaceful resolution of this conflict and the right of the Nagorno Karabakh people to determine their own future.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JIM GERLACH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. GERLACH. Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, on February 25, 2014, I missed two recorded votes on the House floor. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall 63 and "yea" on rollcall 64.

TRIBUTE TO L. TOM BULLA

HON. SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the career and contributions of Mr. L. Tom Bulla, upon the occasion of his receipt of the Shepherd Center of Greenbrier Valley's Community Service Award. Mr. Bulla's work ethic and volunteer spirit are truly deserving of this award, as he has proudly served communities, both in his professional and private life.

Tom began his career in 1962 and worked diligently to build a solid reputation as a credible leader in the North Carolina and Virginia banking communities. In 1981, he was hired as president, CEO, and director of Huntington Trust and Savings Bank in West Virginia. In 1985, Tom oversaw the successful merger of Huntington Trust with the First Huntington National Bank. Shortly thereafter, his services were requested at Charleston National Bank, where he would serve as president and CEO, and again direct the merger of two West Virginia banks; Charleston National with Bank One, in 1993. A year later, Tom accepted a position as president, CEO, and director of First National Bankshares Corporation and The First National Bank in Ronceverte, West Virginia. Tom was very active in the West Virginia Bankers' Association, serving both on its Board of Directors and as its Chairman from 1996 through 1997. Additionally, Tom was selected by his colleagues to serve on the Federal Home Loan Bank of Pittsburgh's Board of Directors from 1997 until 2000.

Tom's career shepherded him into public service with an appointment from Governor JOE MANCHIN as the state's first Secretary of Commerce, where he successfully managed the consolidation of seven government agencies.

As impressive as Tom's achievements in banking and the public sector have been, his

contributions to our communities are equally impactful. Tom dedicated his time and energy to numerous nonprofit agencies including the Clay Center for the Arts and Sciences, Tamarack Foundation, United Way of West Virginia, Hospice, Charleston Area Medical Center, and the American Cancer Society. He served on the Lewisburg Building Commission, West Virginia Education Fund, YMCA Spirit of the Valley, and the West Virginia Economic Development Authority, along with a host of other valuable community and state organizations. And lastly, the Shepherd Center of the Greenbrier Valley, who is honoring him with its Community Service Award for Tom's fulfillment of its three tenets: lifelong learning, service to others, and spiritual growth.

Tom Bulla resides in Lewisburg, West Virginia with his wife, Nancy. Known affectionately as "Papa" or "Papa T" by his grandchildren, Tom enjoys spending time with his extended family and his lifelong love: automobiles.

Mr. Speaker, the State of West Virginia, our communities, and indeed, the United States of America owe Tom Bulla a debt of gratitude for his many years of distinguished service in his professional and personal life. I am honored to call him a friend and fellow West Virginian.

THE IMPORTANCE OF WOMEN PARTICIPATING IN A PEACEFUL RESOLUTION TO THE CONFLICT IN SYRIA

HON. ALBIO SIRE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. SIRE. Mr. Speaker, this month marks the 3 year anniversary of the conflict in Syria. This conflict is destabilizing the region and has created the largest humanitarian crises we have ever seen. Over 100,000 people have already been killed and 9 million people are currently in desperate need of humanitarian assistance. 3 million people are in hard to reach areas and over 250,000 people have been cut off from assistance for over a year. The UN has characterized the situation as "dramatic beyond description." There have already been multiple failed attempts at peace-talks and cease-fires. The international community and Syrian forces must come together to find a long over-due peaceful agreement and end these inhumane and debilitating acts of violence.

As we celebrate International Women's Day on March 8th, 2014, there is no better time to recognize the role of women in these protracted conflicts. They are not just the victims of violence; they are the resilient leaders working tirelessly to keep their families safe. Women leaders, who are pushing for peace can help further peace negotiations, understand a country's needs for an inclusive transition process and put Syrians on a path to reconciliation.

While we continue to search for solutions, the United States joined by the rest of the world must do all it can to have an inclusive peace process that alleviates the tremendous amount of suffering being inflicted on Syria's civilian population.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUIS V. GUTIÉRREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent in the House chamber for votes on Tuesday, March 4, 2014.

Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall vote 91 in support of passage of the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014.

Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall vote 92 in support of H. Res. 488 supporting the people of Venezuela. The Venezuelan people have the right to protest peacefully without fear of violence or intimidation.

THE 25TH SILVER ANNIVERSARY OF THE CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS VETERANS BRAINTRUST

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate March 5, Boston's Crispus Attucks Day, and to celebrate the 25th Silver Anniversary of the Congressional Black Caucus Veterans Braintrust which took place this past September within a truly unique historical and contemporary context of Black, or African American military service and sacrifice. First, a series of national commemorations: the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812, the 150th anniversary of the Civil War to Save the Union and End Slavery, the 100th anniversary of the death of Harriet Tubman, known as "The General," the 90th anniversary of the burial of Col. Charles Young, the third black graduate from West Point, the 70th anniversary of the D-Day Invasion, the 60th anniversary of the Korean War, the 50th anniversary of the assassination of Medgar Evers, World War II veteran and Civil Rights Hero, 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War, and the 12th anniversary of 9/11; and second, amid the drum beat of war, with the U.S. threatened bombing of Syria, the senseless violence of Aaron Alexis and the Washington, DC, Navy Yard shooting rampage, and the battle of the budget, or yet another governmental shutdown on October 1st, affecting more than 800,000 employees at a cost of \$25 billion. According to the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, a disproportionate number of the furloughed federal workers were Black, or African American, who made up 17.7 percent of the workforce.

Chaplain Michael McCoy, Sr., provided the Veterans Braintrust forum's invocation and benediction because we know from experience that Washington forums that start with an invocation and end with a benediction are blessed occasions. Welcoming remarks were given by Representatives CHARLES RANGEL (NY-13), SANFORD BISHOP, Jr. (GA-02), EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON (TX-30) and myself. With Representative SANFORD BISHOP, Jr. speaking in his role as the Ranking Democrat on the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and as

Co-Chair of the bi-partisan Congressional Military Family Caucus expressing a keen awareness of the dangers sequestration and furloughs are having on our nation's servicemembers, military families, and veterans, and further reductions to the active-duty Army, National Guard and the Army Reserves. In addition, as the representative in the U.S. House for Fort Benning, the third largest Army Base in the country where sequestration will have a dramatic impact on the soldiers, their families, and the Columbus, GA, community. Further, he emphasized, if sequestration goes forward, the Army will reduce over 210,000 soldiers to meet their budgetary requirements. Afterward Members were called away to the Capitol to talk on the floor and vote on the budget, and the forum was turned over to moderator Ron E. Armstead, Executive Director. Yet the forum remained well attended, powerful, and there was a tremendous amount of energy in the room.

The keynote address was given by the first African American to obtain the rank of Three Star Admiral in the U.S. Coast Guard, Admiral Manson K. Brown, a native of Washington, DC, who brought greetings from the 24th Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard, Admiral Robert J. Papp, Jr. As Commanding Officer of Coast Guard Headquarters he asked all veterans to stand and be recognized, and to let our Navy friends, colleagues and family members know that our thoughts and prayers continued to be with them over the tragic loss of so many lives at the Washington, DC, Navy Yard. Adm. Brown went on to say the key objective during the sequester has been to preserve the ability of the Coast Guard to meet the highest priority mission activities, including search and rescue, critical security operations, and emergency response. In addition, he pointed out that as part of Adm. Papp's commitment to support the President and First Lady's efforts to strengthen military families over the last three years, the Coast Guard has strengthened their military housing program, enhanced child development services, and improved communications between operational commanders and families by strengthening their Ombudsman network. They also launched a military family campaign, bringing a specific focus to strengthening their linkage with retirees, over the year, in order to create a vibrant national retiree network as a way to enhance outreach to Coast Guard veterans at large. In short, he reported that the Coast Guard as a military service is managing through sequestration and shielding the impacts where they can for military families and veterans. However, this is a delicate balancing act based on tough choices that senior Coast Guard leaders must make between military families and veterans, or non-mission-critical training, air and surface operations reductions, ships, aircraft and shore facilities deferred maintenance, as well as personnel staffing and travel cuts. In closing, Admiral Brown said, "In terms of today's important Congressional budgetary discussions, this situation bears watching into an uncertain future."

The keynote address was followed by two very special presentations. The first recognized Harlem's own, the late Dr. Joseph Warren, a gifted scholar, teacher and leader who inspired many. Second, the Montford Point Marines Associations recognized my efforts in the 2012 awarding of the Congressional Gold Medal, including Rebecca Lungren of 69 Pro-

ductions for the upcoming Montford Point Marines movie "Black Boots."

Our distinguished panel consisted of Keith Miller, President, Foundation for Advancement in Science and Education (FASE); Dr. Mike Haynie, Executive Director and Founder of the Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF) at Syracuse University; Darlene Young, National President of Blacks in Government (BIG); Col. Kevin Preston, USA, Ret., Director of the Veterans Initiative for the Walt Disney Company/ESPN; Lewis Runnion, Director of the Military Affairs Advisory Group at Bank of America (BOA); Mayor Setti Warren of Newton, Massachusetts, Chairman of the Community Development and Housing Committee, U.S. Conference of Mayors; Mike Betz, General Manager, Military Student Initiatives, Education Corporation of America (ECA); Edward Jennings, Jr., U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Southeast Regional Administrator; John Moran, Deputy Assistant Secretary, U.S. Department of Labor Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS); Everett Kelley, National Vice President for the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE); and Dr. Shelley MacDermid Wadsworth, Director, Military Family Research Institute and Center for Families at Purdue University. Their presentations were lively and moving, but also very informative and focused to the point, thus holding the audience to the end and well worth it.

Mr. Miller read a statement about DC resident Shirley Gibson, a real hero. She and other critical incident stress management team members, along with rescue workers, put their health on the line in the aftermath of New York City's 9/11 tragedy, and were later helped by an innovative detoxification treatment that was made available to them. Such innovative treatments as this rely on research funding. Unfortunately such funding is often the first to go when there are budget cuts. Consequently, sequestration is a threat to both the quality of life and health of our veterans.

Dr. Haynie commented on the applications of sequester, and more broadly programmed reductions in federal spending, as the reductions are positioned to impact the employment situation of our nation's veterans and their families. To begin, one of the most immediate consequences of sequester for veterans is the fact that 27.3 percent of the federal workforce is composed of military veterans, many of which will more than likely be furloughed. The DoD workforce will be particularly impacted, as it will sustain approximately 52 percent of the total planned budget cuts. 44 percent of the DoD workforce are military veterans—which speaks volumes about the potential effects on our military readiness, due to the resulting loss of valuable knowledge, skills and experience. In the end, adding veterans currently employed by the federal government to the ranks of the nation's unemployed is positioned to potentially overwhelm supportive services and community-based infrastructure already strained by limited resources. Research also suggests that many of our military and veterans families are already economically vulnerable, and in the face of Congressional budget battles those families are likely to become "collateral damage" of sequester—an indiscriminate and ill-conceived approach to addressing the Nation's fiscal challenges.

Retired Army Colonel Preston commented that our nation's veterans represent a value-

added proposition for the business community, and hiring a veteran is not only the right thing, but also a smart business decision. Also when considering a veteran, do not fixate on their military rank, or job title—instead, view their attributes. Equally important, realize they are coming from a very different culture, have convertible task-oriented skill, years of leadership experience, a code of ethics, and winner's attitude. Moreover, our nation's veterans represent our society's best, so "hire a vet."

Mr. Runnion described how Bank of America's (BOA) Military Affairs Advisory Group was formed to bring together partners from across the company to help service members reintegrate into the civilian workforce through education, employment, wellness and housing. Additionally, how BOA supports our nation's active-duty military and veterans in three major areas: (1) Recruiting and Employment, (2) Customer Support, and (3) Community Outreach. One specific example he shared was BOA's three-year commitment to make up to 1,000 properties available to military veteran support organizations and other non-profit, community-based groups, which provide housing to military veterans and their families. Again, he reasserted, BOA has supported the U.S. military for more than 90 years, by contributing to military non-profits, providing banking services to military service members, and recruiting and retaining military veterans, Guard and Reservists, and military spouses.

Mayor Warren cited the U.S. Conference of Mayors Hunger and Homeless Survey (December, 2012), sharing excerpts from the executive summary—lack of affordable housing as a leading cause, followed by poverty, unemployment, evictions and violence. In addition, he discussed sequestration's impact on U.S. cities at the local level. While pointing out that cities are the laboratories of innovation, and along with their surrounding suburbs represent 90 percent of the nation's wage and salary income, which drives the national economy. Subsequently, 163 mayors have signed the U.S. Conference of Mayor's letter expressing opposition to sequester cuts that will deeply impact cities, for example, Community Development Block Grants (the largest and most flexible stream of federal dollars to cities and municipalities), particularly in addressing the needs of homeless veterans and homeless veterans supportive services organizations, now, and leading up to 2015, or President Obama's promise to end chronic homelessness among veterans.

Mr. Betz, discussed today's trends in education, as a result of troop drawdown and increased separation from the military. First, at a time when overall educational enrollment is declining, student veteran enrollment continues to increase. Second, additional assistance and coordination with the private employment sector is needed to insure employment opportunities for our transitioning student veterans where they may provide adequately for their families. Third, he cautioned against our growing regulatory environment, which threatens to restrict awareness and access to training for our transitioning veterans and limits institutional choice.

Mr. Kelley, an Army veteran stressed how AFGE's members know firsthand the pain that sequestration and furloughs inflict on lower wage federal workers and their families. Stating "the current assault on federal employers is one of the most vicious we have ever seen."

We all know the real agenda behind sequestration and reduction in force: weakening government programs that try to level the playing field for the other 99 percent.” Further, for the past five years, the VA has targeted low wage positions filled primarily by minorities, veterans, the disabled and women for “reclassification.” Or those positions that Congress created after the Vietnam War to provide entry-level job opportunities for disabled veterans. Similar, to broader-based budget cuts at other federal agencies under sequestration, VA’s downgrading initiative is both arbitrary and vicious. Furthermore, we still have a great deal of work to do to fulfill President Obama’s mandate in Executive Order 13518 to make federal government the leader in creating new job opportunities for veterans. Veterans comprise nearly 42 percent of DOD’s workforce, nearly 25 percent of Homeland Securities workforce, and nearly 28 percent of VA’s workforce. In conclusion, he said, “we need to find a solution to the sequester, and not hold our military and their civilian supporters hostage.” That is why AFGE is supporting HR 2785 introduced by Congressman TIMOTHY WALZ (MN–01), to expand veterans preference rights for reservists, and for employees of the VA health care system who do not have title five appeal rights.

And Dr. MacDermid Wadsworth, reiterated, African Americans comprise a significant percentage of service members and veterans, and have fought for the right to fight. And there is solid scientific evidence that shows the military has provided an environment for African American service members and their families that allows them to avoid some of the significant inequities that plague civilian society. For example, in civilian society, Black men are far less likely to marry and far more likely to divorce than their white counterparts. In the military, these differentials disappear, largely because economic resources are less likely to be tied to race. The military has also provided career opportunities and resources for single parents, ensuring that their children have access to health care and childcare—something their enlisted parents would have great difficulty obtaining in the civilian labor force with just a high school education. Moreover, she said, the sequester and the military drawdown pose a number of significant challenges.

First, the sequester has had a cascading effect on family support in DOD. Because the rules of the sequester limit the ways that DOD can implement reductions, the pressure to cut programs that help to minimize the corrosion that military service can impose on families is especially intense. The furlough’s have effectively reduced much of the workforce by 20 percent, and prevented the replacement of departing workers. For example: 30 percent of family support positions in the Army are currently unable to be filled.

Second, the sequester is causing reductions that may be disproportionately hurtful to the programs that prevent and reduce child maltreatment, interpersonal violence, and other important family-related issues.

Third, the drawdown will pose difficult challenges in terms of reducing military opportunities in the future for African Americans to pursue careers in an environment free of many inequities we have been unable to erase in civilian society. Careers already underway will be cut short. The black service members who

are unwillingly sent to the civilian job market will need much more special assistance to ensure that they find jobs and/or positions that maintain their present trajectories.

A fourth challenge that is in part an artifact of the sequester and in-part a result of the always-evolving diversity of families, especially now that it is clear that marriage is an imperfect way to define military families. Because it doesn’t address the families of single service members whose parents, or sibling may constitute their primary support system, and it doesn’t address committed partners who are unmarried. In this period of financial constraint, it might be tempting to forget about families. But every First Sergeant knows that families are key in the minds of service members, families are who they worry about while they serve, families make it possible for them to serve, families support them while they serve, and families care for them when they come home, especially when they are wounded or injured. Consequently, families are far too important to ignore, but she feels that is what could happen because of the perfect storm of sequester and policy complexities.

The question and answer period provided the attendees a long awaited opportunity to both comment and ask questions of the panelist.

While the government shutdown lasted 16 days, five fewer than in 1995—the budget battles, partisanship, gridlock and Congressional inaction have left many Americans confidence shaken with respect to the government according to several recent polls. American trust in government, and belief that it can solve pressing problems is at an all-time low. However, despite highly negative views of government, particularly Congress, according to Representative SANFORD BISHOP, Jr., the recent veterans unemployment rate, the lowest since 2001, tells a very different story. Post 9/11 veteran’s unemployment is now below the national average, and for the first time since 2001 veterans are being hired at a faster rate than non-veterans. This improvement demonstrates that when Congress works together for a common cause we can make a difference.

The 25th silver anniversary gala reception and awards ceremony was held in veterans hearing room 334 of the Cannon House Office Building, and consisted of both church, and club music. Church in terms of the fellowship, spiritually uplifting and awe inspiring presentation of special Congressional Awards to Sgt. James Guilford, Jr., USA, WWII (102 years old); Kenneth Guscott, U.S. Army Air Force, WWII; Hon. Federal Judge George Leighton, Ret., USA, WWII (100 years old); Dr. Rodney Atkins, Co-Chair, Annual Texas African American Soldiers Recognition Day; Johnnie Collins, Jr., Executive Director, AMVETS, Department of DC; James “Jack” Hadley, Founder & Curator of the Jack Hadley Black History Museum; Chaplain Michael McCoy, Sr., National President of the Military Chaplain Association & Associate Director Diversity Development, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Philadelphia City Councilwoman Jannie Blackwell, Widow of Hon. Lucien Blackwell (PA–02), a decorated Korean War veteran, Ari Merretazon, 1st Vice President of Pointman Soldiers

Heart Ministry & 2012 Black Male Engagement (BME) Leadership Award Winner for Veterans Community Development, Rev. Marsena

Mungin, Commissioner of Women at Veterans Are Still Warriors, Veterans Serving Veterans, Inc., Ervin “Tootsie” Russell, USA, Vietnam veteran, AMERICAL Division. Posthumous: Capt. William Cooke, USA, WWII; John D. O’Bryant, USA; Dr. Jay Carrington Chunn, II, USMC; Eddie Lee Washington, USA, an accomplished musician & educator and Sgt. John Wesley Motley, Jr., USA, Korean War. Historic Groups, and Film: the Crispus Attucks Museum of Indianapolis, Jack Hadley Black History Museum in Thomasville, GA, and the film “Veterans of Color,” produced by the Manasota Branch of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) in Florida, and music culminating with Ray Charles soulful rendition of “America the Beautiful.”

Equally important, our once in a lifetime awards guest speaker was none other than Dr. Mark Attucks, the fifth generation descendant of Crispus Attucks, the first American martyr to die during the Boston Massacre on March 5, 1770, a prelude to the American Revolution, accompanied by his father Jesse Attucks, Jr., a decorated U.S. Marine who served in Vietnam. His ancestor was the first of more than 5,000 African American Patriots who served our country in the Revolutionary War. In 1888, a monument was built to honor his forefather and the events of that fateful day in our nation’s history. The following poem was written and read at the dedication ceremony by John Boyle O’Reilly.

“Where shall we seek for a hero, and where shall we find a story?

Our laurels are wreathed for conquest, our songs for completed glory; But we honor a shrine unfinished, a column with pride,

If we sing the deed that was sown like seed when Crispus Attucks died.

“Honor to Crispus Attucks, who was leader and voice that day

The first to defy, and the first to die, with Maverick, Carr and Gray

Call it riot or revolution, his hand first clenched at the crown

His feet were the first in perilous place to pull the King’s flag down

His breast was the first one rent apart that liberty’s stream might flow

For our freedom now and forever, his head was the first laid low

Call it riot or revolution, or mob or crowd, as you may

Such deaths have been seed of nations, and such lives shall be honored for aye.”

In 1998, the U.S. Mint authorized a commemorative silver dollar honoring Crispus Attucks and the Black Revolutionary War Patriots. However, two little known facts stand-out: First, his name Attucks does not have any European roots. Simply speaking the current spelling is not a “slave” name. Second, from the American Revolution to the present day an Attucks has served in the military, fighting for America’s freedom, making Attucks the nation’s longest serving military family.

Lastly, special 25th Silver Anniversary thank yous go to Dr. Frank Smith, Jr., Dr. William Lawson, Dr. Donna Holland Barnes, Shannon Gopaul, Clyde Sims, Jr., James Gordon, Jr., Charles Henderson, Edward Daniels II, Lela Campbell, Carolyn Williams, Rev. Marsina Mungin, Cathy Santos, Chaplain Michael McCoy, Sr., Ralph “Coop” Cooper, Ernest Washington, Jr., Anthony “Tony” Hawkins, Clarence “Tiger” Davis, LeRoy Colston II, Thomas “Tom” Harris, Mildred “Milli” Smith,

Morocco "Roc" Coleman, Robert "Big Bob" Blackwell, Cheryl Holland-Jones, the Educational Corporation of America (ECA), T. Michael Sullivan and the William Joiner Institute for the Study of War and Social Consequences, and Congressional staff members Ronnie Simmons, Lee Footer, Stephanie Anim-Yankah, Jonathan Halpern, Adam McCombs, George Henry, Hannah Kim, and Reba Raffaelli.

Congratulations on 25 years, during which the journey has been the destination.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOAQUIN CASTRO

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 91 on H.R. 3370, Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2013, I am not recorded. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

CONGRATULATING THE MINORITY BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AGENCY ON ITS 45TH ANNIVERSARY AND THE OPENING OF MBDA BUSINESS CENTER AT HOUSTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Minority Business Development Agency, MBDA, on its 45th anniversary and commend its commitment and success in promoting the growth and competitiveness of a critical segment of the U.S. economy, the minority business community. For the past 45 years, the MBDA has provided an essential service to this nation, working to level the playing field for minority-owned businesses.

The results speak for themselves. At the time of MBDA's creation there were only 322,000 minority-owned firms in the nation. Today, the number stands at 5.8 million; 215,000 of which are in the City of Houston. Over the last five years in particular, the MBDA has assisted firms gain access to over \$19 billion in contracts and capital resulting in the creation and retention of nearly 60,000 jobs.

Today, the MBDA is celebrating this day in my district by launching a new MBDA Business Center at Houston Community College, which was awarded a three-year \$900,000 grant to operate the MBDA Business Center. HCC's MBDA Business Center will help boost job creation and global competitiveness of minority-owned businesses across the nation. I look forward to continuing to work with MBDA and Houston Community College to create jobs locally so that we may thrive globally.

Congratulations, MBDA, on 45 years of great work. May the next 45 years be even better.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ALLYSON Y. SCHWARTZ

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 85, I was unable to attend the vote. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

HONORING PATRICK DENEEN

HON. DAVID G. REICHERT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor an Olympic athlete from Washington State's 8th District, Mr. Patrick Deneen. Mr. Deneen just returned from representing our nation in the XXII Olympic Winter Games in Sochi, Russia. Mr. Deneen is an incredible athlete who has reached the pinnacle of his sport and achieved a well-deserved 6th place finish in the Men's Moguls event.

I applaud both his achievement and the hard work and perseverance that paid off during these games. Simply to attend the Olympics is an honor, and to do so well is a testament to everything Mr. Deneen has accomplished. I thank him for representing America so well, and I am proud to call him a constituent and a Washingtonian.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF DR. BENJAMIN J. LAMBERT III

HON. ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of my friend and former colleague in the Virginia General Assembly, Dr. Benjamin J. Lambert III, who passed away on Sunday, March 2, 2014.

Benny, as he was affectionately known by his friends, family, and constituents, was a pioneering figure in Virginia politics. We were both elected to the Virginia House of Delegates in 1977. In 1980, Benny became the first African American elected to represent the Commonwealth on the Democratic National Committee. In 1985, he was elected overwhelmingly to fill the seat vacated by then-Lieutenant Governor Doug Wilder. During my time serving alongside Benny, I always admired his ability to build strong relationships with his colleagues, work across the aisle, and take the tough positions that were not always politically popular but were the ones he believed were right for his constituents.

Benny was born in Richmond on January 29, 1937 to Frances and Benjamin J. Lambert, Jr. He attended Henrico County Schools at a time when they were still racially segregated. He graduated from Virginia Randolph High School in Glen Allen, just outside of Richmond. He went on to earn his undergraduate degree from Virginia Union University, and his graduate degree from the Massachusetts College of Optometry. After graduate school, Benny returned to Richmond and practiced

optometry in the Jackson Ward neighborhood. He was an active member of the Virginia, National and American optometric societies and was chosen as Virginia's Optometrist of the Year in 1980.

Benny came to the Virginia General Assembly after years of political and civic activism, which helped him to become a very influential and effective legislator during his 30 year tenure. He served on several committees in the General Assembly, including Education and Health, General Laws, Privileges and Elections, General Government, and Health and Human Resources. He also has the distinction of being the first African American in the 20th century to serve on the Virginia Senate Finance Committee.

Additionally, he chaired the Subcommittees on Higher Education and General Government, the Brown v. Board Scholarship Commission, and the Lead Abatement Subcommittee. Benny also served as a member of the Joint Commission on Health Care, the Joint Subcommittee Studying the Election Process and Voting Technologies, the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Commission, the Commission on State Employees Health Benefits Reform, and the Virginia Legislative Black Caucus. In 2010, Governor Bob McDonnell appointed him vice chair of the Commission on Government Reform and Restructuring.

Outside of government, Benny had a very active civic life. He was a member of the NAACP, the Richmond Crusade for Voters, the Jackson Ward Civic Association, the Richmond Jaycees, the North Richmond YMCA, and he served on the board of his alma mater, Virginia Union University. Benny was also an active member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.

Benny devoted his career in and out of public service to the citizens of Richmond and Central Virginia, always doing what he thought was best for his community, regardless of the political consequences.

Mr. Speaker, words alone cannot express the tremendous loss to the Richmond community and the Commonwealth of Virginia with Benny's passing. Benny Lambert was a humble optometrist that achieved so much on behalf of his community during his 77 years of life. My thoughts and prayers are with Benny's wife Carolyn, his children and grandchildren, and his many friends and admirers during this difficult time.

RED BANK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BUSINESS MENTOR PROGRAM

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, The American Dream is attainable with hard work and dedication. South Carolina is very fortunate to have devoted teachers who dedicated to helping every child succeed. This week, a group of teachers and students from Red Bank Elementary School in Lexington, South Carolina, are visiting Washington to see the government at work. I am very proud of this group of young people, as they are dedicated to achieving a bright future by participating in their school's Business Mentor Program.

The Red Bank Elementary School Business Mentor Program engages children in learning by connecting them with local mentors affiliated with businesses in the Midlands community. Leaders from Michelin Tire Corporation, Lexington Medical Center, Prysmian Group, Riverbanks Zoo and Botanical Garden, and the South Carolina State Museum have impacted close to 150 students over the past three years. By connecting the skills each student learns in the classroom to a professional environment, these bright children are given the opportunity to chase their dreams.

As a member of the House Education and the Workforce Committee, I am encouraged by the opportunities these young students are able to enjoy and appreciate the business mentors for contributing to their future.

RECOGNIZING THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PENSACOLA NEWS JOURNAL

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the 125th anniversary of the Pensacola News Journal. During its incredible 125 year history, the News Journal has been an invaluable resource for the people of Pensacola and Northwest Florida, and we are proud to have such a first-class newspaper in our community.

In 1889, two local newspapermen, John O'Connor and John C. Witt, gathered support from the local business community to start a daily morning paper. The paper, originally known as the Daily News, was first published on March 5, 1889, with a staff of ten people working to write and produce the paper in downtown Pensacola. The newly created paper quickly began to flourish and within a decade had a daily circulation of more than 1,500. Thanks to the success of the Daily News, a rival paper, the Pensacola Journal was started by M. Loftin in March 1897. The following year, the Pensacola Journal became a daily and began directly competing with the Daily News through publication of a highly regarded afternoon daily.

For more than two decades, these two competing papers fought to expand their reach in the growing Pensacola community. While this fierce competition raised the quality of both papers, it also required constant innovation and expansion, leaving them both in precarious financial shape. In 1922, John H. Perry, a Kentucky native, arrived in Pensacola and decided to purchase the Pensacola Journal. Two years later, he purchased the Daily News and merged the two publications to under the News-Journal Company umbrella.

With the reporting resources of both papers now working together and the business acumen of the News-Journal Company leadership, the two papers began an era of unbridled growth and expansion. The News-Journal Company moved to a new larger location in downtown Pensacola; however, because of the meteoric growth of the papers, they quickly outgrew this location and began plans for further development. In order to meet the needs of this growing company, the News-Journal Company funded the creation of an

entirely new street in downtown Pensacola, which was given to the City of Pensacola at no cost to the taxpayer.

With the space available in its new location, the News-Journal Company constructed one of the most modern and advanced newspaper structures in the Southeast. The company's meteoric growth continued throughout the 1950s when it added a new pressroom and brand new state-of-the-art three-unit Goss Headliner Press. By the end of the decade, the paper required even more room to operate its growing enterprise, and by 1960 the News-Journal company headquarters had more than doubled in space and added two additional press units.

Thanks to the two papers' well-earned reputation for quality journalism, the first-rate publication infrastructure, and robust circulations, the News-Journal Company was acquired by the Nation's largest newspaper publisher, Gannett Company, Inc., in 1969 for \$15.5 million. Six years after the purchase, the News-Journal building underwent another renovation, highlighted by the construction of a new plant that was on the cutting edge of newspaper technology.

After operating under the same roof for more than six decades, the Pensacola Daily News and the Pensacola Journal were combined in 1985, to create one morning newspaper called the News Journal. The News Journal carried on the proud traditions of both long-time Pensacola institutions and continued its commitment to meeting the needs of the expanding Northwest Florida community. A new Goss Headliner offset press was installed to enhance the quality of their printing operation, and the paper won several national newspaper awards for investigative reporting and environmental coverage.

In 2004, the News Journal expanded into the digital age during coverage of the devastating Hurricane Ivan. Despite the catastrophic impact of the storm, which caused nearly \$20 billion in economic damages, the News Journal was able to use its generator and one working phone line to transmit photographs and news coverage of the storm to a sister paper to post on the News Journal's website. During this difficult time, the News Journal relayed stories to millions across the world, aid their outstanding coverage earned the newspaper a Pulitzer Prize finalist nomination, the second in the paper's history.

Pensacola's proud newspaper tradition continues today as the Pensacola News Journal celebrates its 125th anniversary. The News Journal continues to provide excellent coverage to more than 31,000 daily and 47,000 Sunday subscribers. In addition, the paper's website, pnj.com, provides constant news to more than 500,000 visitors, logging more than 4.3 million page views per month. The News Journal's tradition of evolving to meet the needs of the community will continue this summer when the company moves into a new digital facility that will help the paper continue to provide the quality reporting that local residents have grown to trust.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am privileged to recognize the 125th anniversary of the Pensacola News Journal. Freedom of the Press, as guaranteed by the First Amendment, is one of the cornerstones of our Nation's democracy, and it has helped pave the way for American success and innovation. The Pensacola News Journal

is a shining example of the kind of world-class newspaper envisioned by our Founding Fathers. They have enriched Northwest Florida for 125 years, and my wife Vicki and I send our congratulations to all the staff of the News Journal, both current and former, and wish them continued success in the future.

HONORING MIDFIELD HIGH SCHOOL AS ALABAMA'S CLASS 3A BOY'S STATE BASKETBALL CHAMPIONS

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Midfield High School Patriots for their victory in the 2014 Class 3A Alabama State Basketball Championship. On behalf of the 7th Congressional District, I congratulate the Patriots for the tremendous athleticism and teamwork they displayed throughout the season under the outstanding leadership of Head Coach Darrell Barber and his coaching staff. Midfield High School won its second state championship in three years with its victory over Barbour County on Saturday, March 1. These young men and their coaches pursued excellence and were driven by hard work and determination during every game of the season. The Patriots finished the season undefeated in their region and lost only 7 games overall.

As the daughter of a high school basketball coach, I know this decisive victory is the result of the tremendous efforts of both the players and coaching staff of Midfield High School. Coach Barber is known for setting high expectations for his players and assisting them in meeting those expectations. The exemplary leadership and dedicated support from the coaching staff was a major factor in the success of the Midfield Patriots.

In the championship game, the Midfield Patriots defeated Barbour County by 22 points for a final score of 62-40. The Patriots forced 11 turnovers, but only gave up the ball seven times.

In the second half, the Midfield Patriots led by as many as 25 points and never less than 13 points. During the entire fourth quarter, the Patriots never led by less than 20 points. Tournament MVP Aaron Gaines scored 22 points with four 3-pointers. Alvin Murry completed the game with 15 points and 10 rebounds. Jermaine Turner scored 11 points and made eight assists and seven rebounds.

Following the victory, Head Coach Darrell Barber thanked God, his family and the Midfield community for supporting the Patriots throughout the season. He explained how the nay-sayers gave the team motivation making them more dedicated to win. "It gave us a little fuel," he told Al.com following the victory. "As you all know myself and my guys, we play with a chip on our shoulder and we coach with a chip on our shoulder to get this program recognition."

Winning the state championship is a proud moment these boys achieved through hard work and commitment. Members of the team include: Eric Billups, Kelvin Eatmon, Aaron Gaines, Ahmad Isaac, Derrick Morse, Jabril Muhammad, Alvin Murry, Joseph Murry, Jeremy Shields, Jermaine Turner, and Cedric Russell.

I would like to commend the Midfield coaching staff under the leadership of Head Coach Darrell Barber and the assistant coaches including Coaches Matthew Epps, Courtney Jones, and Charles Thomas and the bus driver, Mr. Rod Isaac.

On behalf of the 7th Congressional District, the State of Alabama and this nation, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the accomplishments of the Midfield High School Boys Basketball Team for their victory in the Class 3A Alabama State Championship. Congratulations. Go Patriots.

RECOGNIZING TECH MOLDED
PLASTICS AS PLASTICS NEWS
PROCESSOR OF THE YEAR
AWARD

HON. MIKE KELLY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my heartiest congratulations to Tech Molded Plastics Inc., a family-owned injection mold company, on being named Plastics News' Processor of the Year.

Located in Meadville, Pennsylvania, Tech Molded Plastics celebrated its 40th year in business just last year. In 1973, Bill Hanaway and his wife Eva started their family business in a rented garage. Over the years, Tech Molded has expanded and diversified its business through smart investments in their peo-

ple and technology. In the mid-1990s, Tech Molded erected the factory building that now houses its company headquarters. In 2011, the company expanded again by purchasing the building adjacent to it with an investment of more than \$1.5 million. Today, sons Scott, Mark, and Doug still run the family business along with their mother, Eva, manufacturing precision parts for the electronics, automotive, and medical industry. Employing 120 Pennsylvanians and generating sales of \$17.7 million, Tech Molded Plastics embodies the best of America's family-owned small businesses.

Mr. Speaker, in light of being awarded Processor of the Year, I ask that my colleagues join with me today in recognizing Tech Molded Plastics for its national leadership in the plastics industry and for the invaluable contributions of the Hanaway family to the citizens of Meadville and Western Pennsylvania.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, March 6, 2014 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

MARCH 11

10 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Protection

To hold hearings to examine finding the right capital regulations for insurers.

SD-538

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

Subcommittee on Primary Health and Aging

To hold hearings to examine what the U.S. health care system can learn from other countries.

SD-430

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Subcommittee on Financial and Contracting Oversight

To hold hearings to examine whistleblower retaliation at the Hanford nuclear site.

SD-628

10:15 a.m.

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine open government and freedom of information, focusing on reinvigorating the Freedom of Information Act for the digital age.

SD-226

2:15 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities

To hold closed hearings to examine United States Special Operations Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program; with the possibility of a closed session in SVC-217 following the open session.

SR-222

Committee on Foreign Relations

Business meeting to consider Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter, and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing, done at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, in Rome, Italy, on November 22, 2009 (the "Agreement") (Treaty Doc.112-04) Convention on the Conservation and Man-

agement of High Seas Fishery Resources in the South Pacific Ocean, done at Auckland, New Zealand, November 14, 2009 (Treaty Doc.113-01), Convention on the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fisheries Resources in the North Pacific Ocean, done at Tokyo on February 24, 2012, and signed by the United States on May 2, 2012 (Treaty Doc.113-02), Amendment to the Convention on Future Multilateral Cooperation in the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries, adopted on September 28, 2007, at the twenty-ninth Annual Meeting of the North Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) (Treaty Doc.113-03), S. Res. 361, recognizing the threats to freedom of the press and expression in the People's Republic of China and urging the Government of the People's Republic of China to take meaningful steps to improve freedom of expression as fitting of a responsible international stakeholder, original Ukraine legislation, and the nominations of Bathsheba Nell Crocker, of the District of Columbia, to be Assistant Secretary for International Organization Affairs, Robert A. Wood, of New York, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as U.S. Representative to the Conference on Disarmament, Luis G. Moreno, of Texas, to be Ambassador to Jamaica, John L. Estrada, of Florida, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Joseph William Westphal, of New York, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Douglas Alan Silliman, of Texas, to be Ambassador to the State of Kuwait, Mark Gilbert, of Florida, to be Ambassador to New Zealand, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador to the Independent State of Samoa, and Matthew H. Tueller, of Utah, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Yemen, all of the Department of State.

S-116

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Legislative Branch

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2015 for the Congressional Budget Office and the Government Accountability Office.

SD-192

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Subcommittee on the Efficiency and Effectiveness of Federal Programs and the Federal Workforce

To hold hearings to examine more efficient and effective government, focusing on improving the regulatory framework.

SD-419

MARCH 12

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the situation in Afghanistan.

SH-216

9:45 a.m.

Committee on Rules and Administration

To hold hearings to examine election administration, focusing on innovation, administrative improvements and cost savings.

SR-301

10 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

Subcommittee on Housing, Transportation, and Community Development

To hold hearings to examine Superstorm Sandy recovery, focusing on ensuring strong coordination among Federal, state, and local stakeholders.

SD-538

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

To hold hearings to examine how a fair minimum wage will help working families succeed.

SD-430

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine management, focusing on creating a 21st century government.

SD-342

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine certain nominations.

SD-226

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of the Air Force Sergeants Association, American Ex-Prisoners of War, Fleet Reserve Association, Gold Star Wives, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, Non Commissioned Officers Association, Paralyzed Veterans of America, and Wounded Warrior Project.

SD-G50

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Department of Defense

To hold hearings to examine defense health programs.

SD-192

Committee on the Budget

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request and revenue proposals for fiscal year 2015.

SD-608

2 p.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Department of Homeland Security

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2015 for the Department of Homeland Security.

SD-138

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2015 for Veterans' Programs.

SR-418

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Strategic Forces

To hold hearings to examine military space programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR-222

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

Subcommittee on Economic Policy

To hold hearings to examine the state of United States retirement security, focusing on the middle class.

SD-538

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Business meeting to consider S. 1014, to reduce sports-related concussions in youth, S. 1406, to amend the Horse Protection Act to designate additional unlawful acts under the Act, strengthen

penalties for violations of the Act, improve Department of Agriculture enforcement of the Act, S. 1468, to require the Secretary of Commerce to establish the Network for Manufacturing Innovation and for other purposes, S. 2022, to establish scientific standards and protocols across forensic disciplines, S. 2028, to amend the law relating to sport fish restoration and recreational boating safety, S. 2049, to curb unfair and deceptive practices during assertion of patents, H.R. 2052, to direct the Secretary of Commerce, in coordination with the heads of other relevant Federal departments and agencies, to conduct an interagency review of and report to Congress on ways to increase the global competitiveness of the United States in attracting foreign direct investment, an original bill entitled, "U.S. Merchant Marine Academy of Visitors Enhancement Act", and the nominations of Kelly R. Welsh, of Illinois, to be General Counsel of the Department of Commerce, Kathryn B. Thomson, of Virginia, to be General Counsel of the Department of Transportation, David J. Arroyo, of New York, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and nominations for promotion in the United States Coast Guard.

SR-253

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine national security and foreign policy priorities in the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2015 for International Affairs.

SD-419

MARCH 13

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine United States Northern Command and United States Southern Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD-G50

10 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Stanley Fischer, of New York, Jerome H. Powell, of Maryland, and Lael Brainard, of the District of Columbia, all to be a Member of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, Gustavo Velasquez Aguilar, of the District of Columbia, to be Assistant Secretary of Housing and

Urban Development, and J. Mark McWatters, of Texas, to be a Member of the National Credit Union Administration.

SD-538

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2015 for the Department of Homeland Security.

SD-342

Committee on Indian Affairs

To hold an oversight hearing to examine tribal transportation, focusing on pathways to infrastructure and economic development in Indian country.

SD-628

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Subcommittee on Emergency Management, Intergovernmental Relations, and the District of Columbia

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2015 for the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

SD-342

MARCH 25

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine U.S. Pacific Command and U.S. Forces Korea in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD-G50

MARCH 26

10 a.m.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of The American Legion.

SD-G50

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support

To hold hearings to examine the the current readiness of United States forces in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR-232A

MARCH 27

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Navy in re-

view of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD-G50

APRIL 1

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine U.S. European Command and U.S. Transportation Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD-G50

2:15 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities

To hold hearings to examine proliferation prevention programs at the Department of Energy and at the Department of Defense in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program; with the possibility of a closed session in SVC-217 following the open session.

SR-222

APRIL 2

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support

To hold hearings to examine military construction, environmental, energy, and base closure programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR-232A

APRIL 3

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Army in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD-G50

APRIL 10

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Air Force in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD-106